

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following Listing of Claims will replace a prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A method of producing solid particles comprising the steps of:

providing a load stock comprising:

~~a polymer, a wax and/or a lipid~~ at least one material that is a solid at standard temperature and pressure selected from the group consisting of polysaccharides, polyesters, polyethers, polyanhydrides, polyglycolide, polylactic acid, polycaprolactone, polyethylene glycol, polypeptides, waxes and glycerides; and

optionally, a biologically active substance;

contacting the load stock with a supercritical fluid to form a melt;

contacting the melt with a polar solvent to form an emulsion, the emulsion having a discontinuous phase comprising the melt and a continuous phase comprising the polar solvent; and

expanding the emulsion across a pressure drop to form solid particles comprising the load stock.

Claim 2 (original): The method according to claim 1 wherein the emulsion is expanded through a heated nozzle.

Claim 3 (original): The method according to claim 1 wherein the solid particles are collected in an expansion vessel.

Claim 4 (original): The method according to claim 3 wherein a stream of inert gas flows through the expansion vessel to remove the expanded supercritical fluid.

Claim 5 (original): The method according to claim 1 further comprising adjusting a rate of expansion of the emulsion across the pressure drop to control the morphology and/or size of the solid particles.

Claim 6 (original): The method according to claim 1 wherein the supercritical fluid is carbon dioxide.

Claim 7 (original): The method according to claim 1 wherein the polar solvent is selected from the group consisting of water and alcohol.

Claim 8 (original): The method according to claim 1 wherein a surfactant is added to the polar solvent before the polar solvent is contacted with the melt.

Claims 9-20 (canceled)